(iv) To encourage the conversion of in-use vehicles to use cleaner fuels such as compressed natural gas (CNG), the Government has converted a large number of its vehicles to CNG. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas plans to expand the supply of CNG by the setting up of additional on-line stations along the HBJ pipe-line.

(v) Low-sulphur diesel is being supplied at all outlets of Delhi since 1.4.1996.

(vi) The number of outlets supplying unleaded petrol within city limits was expanded from 80 to 197 as on 1.4.1996 and from 8 to 124 on highways as on 1.11.1996. The number of outlets is expected to be increased during the current year to 222 within the city limits and to 145 on the highways.

(vii) Free pollution check camps were continued to be organised by the Transport Department, Government of Delhi and by the automobile manufacturers.

[English]

Rainfall in Gujarat

4766. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that about 90-percent of the crops have perished and livestock have to be shifted in Gujarat particularly in the Kutch district due to very low level of rainfall during the current year;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard and the details regarding rainfall and droughts in the State during the said period;

(c) the details regarding amount of financial assistance allocated and actually released so far from Calamity Relief Fund for this purpose;

(d) whether any detailed report has been received by the Central Government from the State Government in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) According to the information received from the Government of Gujarat, out of 896 villages of 9 Talukas in Kutch district, the State Government have declared scarciy in 687 villages and semi-scarcity in 208 villages, due to deficient rainfall to the extent of 57% during the South-West Monsoon, 1996.

(c) to (e) A Memorandum was recieved from the Government of Gujarat detailing the extent of drought situation in various districts and the proposed relief measures. Government of India have already released to the State Government Rs. 104.70 crores as their share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) during 1996-97 and Rs. 18.41 crores for the CRF for 1997-98 to enable the State Government to undertake necessary relief measures.

Sugarcane Shortage

4767. SHRI B.L. SHANKAR : Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sugar mills are hit by cane shortage during 1996-97 sugar season;

(b) if so, the details in this regard and the reasons therefor, State-wise;

(c) the loss of sugar production in the country as a result thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to avoid the recurrence of such situation in future?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) So far no State Government has reported shortage in availability of sugarcane to the sugar mills during the current 1996-97 sugar season. However, as per the available information as on 31st March, 1997, 321 sugar mills were in operation during 1996-97 season as against 395 and 313 on the corresponding dates of 1995-96 and 1994-95 sugar seasons respectively.

(c) and (d) The production of sugar during the current 1996-97 sugar season as on 31st March, 1997 was 106.05 lakh tonnes as against 117.27 lakh tonnes on the corresponding date last year. The Government have taken steps to increase sugar production such as increase in minimum sugarcane price, grant of loans from Sugar Development Fund for cane development etc.

[Translation]

World Wild Animals Day

4768. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR' : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Wild Animals Day was observed during October, 1990;

(b) if so, the details of the programme organised on the said occasion;

(c) whether on that day any message was given regarding protection of wild animals; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to spread the message?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) No "World Wild Animals Day" was observed during October, 1990. However, "Wildlife Week" was celebrated during the first week of October, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

(b) A number of programmes were organised through out the country by the State Governments, which included organisation of talks, seminars and workshops, photography, painting and essay competitions, visits to zoos, sanctuaries & national parks by school children etc. The media was also used extensively to convey the message of wildlife conservation.

(c) and (d) The Prime Minister's message on the occassion of the wildlife week was circulated to all the State Governments and they were advised to give wide publicity to it through the media and by translating into local languages.

[English]

Demand of Foodgrains and Edible Oil

4769. SHRI ANCHAL DAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has placed any demand to enhance the quota of foodgrains and edible oil for 1997-98;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government of Orissa have requested for maintaining the present level of monthly allocation of foodgrains (One lac MTs of rice and 50,000 MTs of wheat) under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and have also made a demand for allocation of imported edible during the year 1997 as under :

January to July 1997 - 200 MTs per month

August to November 97 - 1200 MTs per month

(c) Under the TPDS, the annual allocation of foodgrains to States/UTs has been fixed on the basis of average annual lifting for 10 years. Accodingly, the annual allocation of foodgrains for Orissa comes to 426.45 thousand MTs. of which 381.80 thousand MTs is for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and 44.65 thousand MTs is for Above Poverty Line (APL) population.

Scientific Research

4770. SHRI SUNDER LAL PATWA : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by the Government on development of science during the last five years;

(b) whether the allocation of amount has been very low keeping in view the importance of Scientific Research at present;

(c) whether the Government propose to increase the allocation for Scientific Research during the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the manner in which the Government propose to ensure that the country's industries etc. compete with those of developed countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The amount spent by the Government on development of science in the Central Sector during the last Plan period of five years (1992-97) has been estimated to be of the order of Rupees eleven thousand crores.

(b) The expenditure on promotion of scientific research has been steadily on the increase. The allocations during the Eighth Plan were more than doubled as compared to the Seventh Plan.

(c) and (d) While the allocations under scientific research are proposed to be stepped up in the ninth plan, there are specific schemes and also policy initiatives in position to ensure that the country's industries compete with those of developed countries.

Travancore Titanium Products

4771. SHRI KODI KUNNIL SURESH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have recieved any complaints about the Travancore Titanium products in Trivandrum, Kerala for the environmental issue;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have issued any notice to Travancore Titanium products for the pollution and environmental protection; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?